

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM NEWS

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ST. MARTIN SHARING HIS MANTLE

ANTHONY VAN DYCK

THE STORY OF ST. MARTIN TOLD BY A GREAT PAINTER

THE painting of St. Martin dividing his mantle with the beggar depicts a legend of hundreds of years ago—for it was then that many stories were told of brave knights and their deeds of valor and kindness. This delightful legend became the subject of an altarpiece, which the Flemish master, Anthony Van Dyck, was asked to paint in the church of the village of Saventhem in Belgium over three hundred years ago.

As a little boy Van Dyck showed artistic talent and at the age of ten he became a pupil in the Guild of St. Luke, a guild to which all artists belonged. When only sixteen he entered the studio of Peter Paul Rubens, a great master-painter, who lived in Antwerp, Belgium. There he painted half-lengths of religious figures and soon he was admitted to the Guild of St. Luke as a master. For several years he stayed with Rubens and was set to work copying paintings by great Italian painters, which were in his master's studio. At twenty-one he had come to fame and an early portrait of himself showed great promise of his ability as a portrait painter.

Van Dyck liked best to paint on canvas, while Rubens preferred painting on wood. He also liked to make the feet of his subjects long and the fingers long, too, and also tapering and slender. He could bring out in his paintings the breeding and air of an aristocrat—thus showing his own character as he was a man of cultured personality and gentle and charming in manner. Always handsome in appearance, he was happiest when among great people. At the age of thirty-three he journeyed to England to become the Court Painter of a great King, Charles I, who dubbed him knight as Sir Anthony Van Dyck. He also presented him with a gold chain and his portrait set in diamonds. Of course his chief duty was to make pictures of the King and his Queen, Henrietta Maria of France and so he painted them again and again and their children, too.

This gentle-faced painter could also paint fine pictures of animals and his superb masterpiece of Charles I standing before his horse every child should know. The picture, painted in stately fashion, hangs in the Louvre Museum in Paris.

The Toledo Museum of Art also has an equestrian painting by this master. It is called St. Martin sharing his Mantle with the Beggar, and it was the finished sketch on wood for the famous altarpiece Van Dyck was invited to paint for the church in the village of Saventhem while on his way to Italy to see the masterpieces of the Venetian painters. He was only a young man of twenty-two when this honor came to him. It was also the artist's original sketch for a picture he later painted of this subject, which hangs in Windsor Castle in England.

The handsome knight, clad in armour, is mounted on a white Flemish horse. With his sword he severs the brilliant red mantle which is eagerly grasped by two beggars crouching on bundles of straw. Behind them is a third beggar, holding a child. The architecture in the background is only briefly indicated, while to the left another man on horseback and an Ethiopian accompany St. Martin. Of course the artist has painted the strongest contrast on and around the person he considered the most important in the picture. The outstretched arm of the woman, the glances of the beggars and of the man on the dark horse all carry one's attention to St. Martin, the center of interest.

The picture is not at all a quiet one as it does not contain quiet lines in that they are not vertical or horizontal. The slanting line of the knight's sword repeats that of his shoulder and cloak and these lines are crossed by those slanting in the opposite direction, leading from the tip of his right shoulder, along his arm to the head of the white horse; again from the edge of his red mantle to his hand and knee and to the horse's bent knee; and again a line, which passes along the heads of the beggars to the knee of the seated one. These lines, criss-crossing each other, give one the feeling of activity which is expressed in the composition.

In contrast to the red-orange and greyed red-orange of textures such as the mantle, flesh tones, dark colored horse and a part of the background on each side, there are the cool colors of the pale blue-green of the archway, the knight's horse and the highlights of his armour.

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SAVENTHEM CHURCH



WINDSOR CASTLE



TOLEDO MUSEUM

This splendid gift came to the United States from M. Charles Leon Cardon of Belgium as an expression of gratitude for the assistance given the Belgian people by the citizens of the United States during the World War. It was designated by the donor ever to remain in the city which had been the home of the Honorable Brand Whitlock, who had been made Ambassador to Belgium, and during his stay there had won the admiration and friendship of M. Cardon.

On the seventh day of October, 1919, this painting was presented to The Toledo Museum of Art with an appropriate ceremony, King Albert of Belgium, Queen Elizabeth and Crown Prince Leopold being present, together with Ambassador Whitlock and Mrs. Whitlock. Thirty thousand citizens and children of Toledo greeted the royal and distinguished visitors on the Museum's grounds that day.

TO THE SECOND YEAR CHILDREN

That is what we call you in the Museum because you have completed with understanding, the problems of the Children's Class of the first year in the School of Design.

You boys and girls of this class are very important in the life of this city. Some of us feel that you are the most important group whom we have yet taught. We feel a deep sense of responsibility in your teaching because we want to give you something which you can use all the rest of your lives. We want to equip you with tools which will work with precision and honesty.

This is the first time that we have told you just what we are trying to do for you. We have

given you your problems, you second year children, and we have let you discover for yourselves their usefulness in everyday life. But now we feel that you must realize the dignity of your work and so we are letting you into the secret.

Those things which are real and those things which are true are the only ones which have lasted throughout history. This is true of literature, music, art, architecture, character and heroic deeds. All of these things are built upon simple principles.

We have given you in the first year a few elemental rules of design which can be used in many ways. In this second year we will teach you a few of these ways. The events of the past few years are showing us that there is something unsound in the principles with which we have made our world design and they are warning us to realize the true values of life. In what particular way these changes are going to evidence themselves, we do not know. But of a new set of ideals strong and sound, we may be sure.

One now speaks of the world as once one spoke of one's town, one's state and one's country. This has been an unconscious transition. You boys and girls belong to today and you are entering this new world, not the old one, new to you, but a new world for us all. And that is why we feel so deeply that you who come to this class must be fully equipped with a knowledge of the fundamental laws of color and design which we can give to you.

There is not a moment of the day nor a thing which you may do, create or see, to which these simple principles may not be

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adapted. We should be surrounded with harmony of color and good proportion. Nature shows us the way with beauty of sky, white clouds, green trees, green grass and blue waters, all harmonious and beautiful. She gives us variety with winter, summer, spring and fall and daily variety with sunrise and sunset. And the nights differ only in beauty with the pattern of the stars and the light of the moon. But how have we learned our lesson? Look about and compare what man has built with what nature has given us.

With these truths which you are taught in the Museum School of Design, you have a measure with which to judge. Not only this but you have also the tools with which to create a new and enduring beauty. You may think this is too much to expect of these lessons, but as I said before, all of the greatest things are based on the simplest principles. If these elements are sound the structure stands, but if they are false, nothing can save it.

The very first lesson of the second year is of the utmost value to everyone. It is like magic in its results. It is no secret but the knowledge or ignorance of this one color principle might easily make or break a great factory. Suppose you are asked to paint an automobile in red, yellow and blue and make it beautiful. You would think this was impossible but there are two ways by which it may be accomplished. The intense colors of red, blue and yellow may be either raised or lowered in value to create harmony. But in this first lesson, from the color wheel which you made the first year, you choose three colors such as I have mentioned. They are raised in value by the simple method of adding white to each color until you have the value which you wish and you will find that the white is like a string running through some loose jewels and holding them together. Then, too, if you wish to harmonize these colors and yet keep them low in value or dark, they may be harmonized by adding a little black to each color. This, too, is like a string running through them and holding them together.

You may look about you and see many color combinations in rugs, carpets, chair covers, curtains, dress materials, hats, that could be made much more beautiful if they obeyed this principle of harmony. This is not the only method of obtaining harmony of color but it is a very useful one.

In the next lesson, you are taught a most valuable and interesting way to put this harmonizing principle into daily use.

ART TALKS AND MOTION PICTURES

The Museum is inviting you to the Art Talks, which have been planned especially for children and which will open on Saturday, October 3, at 2:00 P.M. The life, arts and customs of the ancient Greeks will form interesting subjects for becoming better acquainted with the people of this very old country.

One of the first talks will be "An American Boy visits the Land of Homer," and some of the others will be about Greek gods and goddesses; games of the Greek children; a day in a Greek school and in a Greek home; Myron, the sculptor of the Discus Thrower; Athena's Temple, the Parthenon; and the boy, Alexander. You will find a complete schedule of the talks elsewhere in the Museum News. They will be given every Saturday and Sunday afternoon at 2:00 and 3:20 o'clock and will be illustrated with lantern slides.

Following each talk, free motion pictures will be shown. Many fine films made in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, of New York City; travel reels, which will take one to the land of Greece and to other lands; features; spotlights and comedies will comprise programs with which every Museum visitor will be delighted.

The motion pictures will be shown at 2:40 and 4:00 every Saturday and Sunday afternoon. As announced heretofore Saturday is always the better day to come as it is less crowded than is Sunday.